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July 12, 2004

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Federal Communications Commission
Office of the Secretary

The Honorable Michael Powell
Chairman
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

VIA FAX

Re: Support of AT&T prepaid calling card filing (Docket 03-133)

Dear Chairman Powell:

As a small business owner in Georgia, I have found prepaid calling cards to be an important tool for business. Calling cards give me complete flexibility to purchase only the long distance minutes I need with the added benefit of low cost. My local discount store which is open 24/7 has everything I need. The cards I purchase don't have hidden charges or connection fees. It's a perfect fit because flexibility and low cost are exactly what I'm looking for as I focus on growing my business.

Now, I've learned that BellSouth is pushing a proposal that could add new fees to some prepaid calling cards. I have watched the Bell companies sink millions into hiring high-paid lobbyists and lawyers. I've also read countless news reports on the Bells' record earnings while other segments of the economy are still struggling. Somewhere in this fray, I've watched the notion of public good fly out the window. Adding a special connection fee on calls made with prepaid cards is just another example of Bell-backed, bad-for-consumer efforts in Washington.

The Bell companies are already fairly compensated for long-distance calls made with calling cards. Allowing these companies to say that prepaid card calls should be treated as in-state calls will only jack up prices for small business people like me. My understanding is that proposed in-state access fees will raise calling card fees as much as 20 times higher than the current interstate access fees the Bells currently collect. That's outrageous and unnecessary.

Long distance prepaid calls should be billed at the competitive rates that abound in the long-distance industry, not the inflated local monopoly prices of the Bell Companies. The long-distance access charges already calculated into pre-paid calling card rates should apply, not the higher in-state access charges the Bells want. I urge you to support AT&T's position to prevent the Bell Companies from price gouging small businesses and consumers with new, high in-state fees on pre-paid calling cards.

Sincerely,



Catherine R. Waters
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Atlanta, GA 30319

Number of Copies received 0
DATE 7/26/04

Cc: FCC Commissioners Abernathy, Copps, Martin and Adelstein